



Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office

Operations Directorate — Fact Sheet

Department of Defense Directive 2310.2

Personnel Recovery

ISSUE: Department of Defense Directive 2310.2, Personnel Recovery (PR).

BACKGROUND: Chapter 76 of the FY 96 Defense Authorization Act, commonly referred to as the “Missing Persons Act,” directed the Secretary of Defense to, “establish within the Office of the Secretary of Defense an office to have responsibility for Department of Defense policy relating to missing persons.” It directed that the responsibilities of the office include, “policy, control, and oversight within the Department of Defense of the entire process for investigation and recovery related to missing persons (including matters related to search, rescue, escape, and evasion); and coordination with other departments and agencies of the United States on all matters concerning missing persons.” The Missing Persons Act states that the office “shall be responsible for the coordination of such purposes within the Department of Defense among the military departments, the Joint Staff, and the commanders of the combatant commands . . . and shall establish policies which shall apply uniformly throughout the Department of Defense, for PR (including search, rescue, escape, and evasion).”

On October 3, 1996 in a letter, “Office of Missing Personnel Implementation Initiatives, the USD(P) designated the DASD(POW/MIA) to the DASD for Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Affairs. He realigned functional responsibility for PR from the ASD(SO/LIC) to the ASD(ISA), for further delegation to the DASD(POW/Missing Personnel Affairs).

DISCUSSION: In order to fulfill our new responsibilities for PR, DPMO promulgated DoD Directive 2310.2, “Personnel Recovery,” which establishes policy and assigns responsibilities for PR. The Deputy Secretary of Defense signed initial issuance of the Directive on June 30, 1997. In 1999, the formation of the Joint Personnel Recovery Agency (JPRA) under United States Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM) and the many lessons learned since the original publication of DoDD 2310.2 necessitated a major revision to the policy that serves as the foundation for all else DoD does in the recovery realm. The most important change in the policy is that it transfers Executive Agency (less policy) for PR from the Air Force to the Commander in Chief (CINC), United States Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM), responsible for coordinating and advancing PR capabilities throughout the Department. This change will reinforce the “joint” nature of PR, and establish a four-star joint advocate for this important function. Our major responsibilities as outlined in DoDD 2310.2 include:

- Establish and promulgate PR policy; provide policy guidance and recommendations on PR; determine PR requirements for DoD policies and strategic guidance; and promulgate policy and provide policy guidance and recommendations on DoD support to civil search and rescue.
- Evaluate the policies, processes, and programs that affect the DoD ability to execute PR operations; recommend actions, as necessary, to enhance PR capabilities; and assist USJFCOM to perform its responsibilities in regard to PR.
- Establish a PRRC for activation during PR incidents, and exercise the PRRC periodically to ensure that procedures and coordination channels are current and functional.
- Represent the Department of Defense at all inter-agency forums on PR matters.
- Ensure the Combatant Commands identify their high-risk-of-capture and exploitation personnel, and the DoD Components ensure personnel are trained on the Code of Conduct, including Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) tactics, techniques, and procedures according to their risk of capture or isolation.